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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

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November 27, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT

Secretary Kissinger asked that I pass you the following report:

"After a brief visit to the Forbidden City, we launched the substantive discussions with the Chinese Tuesday morning. During the day, we had almost four hours of talks with Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-Ping and Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-Hua, covering international issues in the morning and normalization of bilateral relations in the afternoon. At the Chinese invitation, I did most of the talking; we will hear their views tomorrow. The basic impressions today were their continued preoccupation with the Soviet Union, and the possibility that we will not make major progress on the normalization question this trip. However, the Chinese stress that the two issues are separate and we have after all no reason to be over-anxious.

"We opened with a plenary session during which we agreed that I would discuss international issues and normalization with Teng and Chiao while counter-part talks would cover bilateral issues such as exchanges and trade. The Chinese noted Tanaka's resignation and said they preferred Ohira as his successor since they consider Fukuda pro-Soviet. At the outset Teng said that US-China relations were essentially on course; they would like to make progress toward diplomatic relations along the Japanese model but are prepared to wait if we cannot be as forthcoming on Taiwan as they like. Continually invoking Chairman Mao, Teng said the international situation, i.e., the Soviet threat, was more important to them.

"In a more restricted session after the plenary meeting, I gave a rundown on the major international questions:

"-- Our attitude and policy toward the Soviet Union remains unchanged. We are still wary of its hegemonic designs. It does not matter where Moscow's initial target is, for either way the danger exists over time. I made this point in response to the recent Chinese emphasis that Moscow threatens the West more than China. I outlined the SALT discussions at

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Vladivostok and said that the Soviet movement toward our position indicated that they were not as strong as some had believed. Their acceptance of equal numbers without counting FBS actually give us a numerical advantage.

"-- I noted briefly that our relations with Europe, including France, had considerably improved since my last visit to China.

"-- I reviewed the agreements in the Middle East and the erosion of Soviet influence over the past year and said that I thought gradual progress was still possible. I pointed out that our domestic situation required a step-by-step process. We are working quietly behind the scenes, and we would in any event never move in response to Soviet pressure.

"-- With regard to the South Asian sub-continent, I said we were seeking to improve relations with India in order to balance Soviet influence. We strongly stand behind Pakistan independence and we hope to give them our assistance when Bhutto visits you early next year. Iran is broadening its role in the region along the lines that the Chinese and we find useful.

"-- I introduced the new themes of energy and food, suggesting that it is not in the longer term Chinese interest to take us on blindly with respect to these issues. The weakening of the West due to the oil crisis would not be to the Chinese advantage. The US could fare well on its own but we would act firmly for the sake of our friends.

"-- Finally, I said that we would be willing to discuss Cambodia if they wish to. We are prepared to see a role for Sihanouk as a result of negotiations, but we could not simply abandon our friends for this would have ramifications beyond Cambodia. The Chinese seemed interested in pursuing this question, though they confined themselves to their standard line in this opening session.

"-- I deliberately skipped Korea, since they are the damandeur on this issue and we apparently have the voting edge in the UN.

"The afternoon session was devoted to the issue of Taiwan and diplomatic relations with the PRC. I purposely talked about principles and the problems we face rather than getting into specific formulations. I said that we are prepared to talk concretely but if we could not reach understandings, we are content to keep essentially on our present course of gradual withdrawal.

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They adopted a seemingly indifferent attitude. I underlined the domestic policy problems and the effect on other countries of an abrupt abandonment of the defense of our friends on Taiwan. I said that if they could show understanding on this aspect, specifically the prospect of a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue, we would be prepared to move toward complete normalization. Otherwise we were content to continue drawing down our military presence and stringing out the diplomatic process. There are essentially three issues: Our residual presence in Taiwan once we establish diplomatic relations; the principle of one China with Taiwan being a part of it; and the prospect of a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue in place of our defense commitment. Their opening stance did not indicate much give, but this is not surprising and it is too early to judge their real positions. I will attempt to probe the degree of their flexibility, and if reasonable progress does not look possible, there is no need to press the issue on this trip.

"At the end of the Taiwan discussion, Teng said that whatever happened with respect to Taiwan we should show further progress in US-Sino relations. Therefore, they wanted to invite Schlesinger to visit the PRC. This, I believe, would have very severe repercussions in the USSR. I shall turn it off today and try to turn it into an invitation to you. I shall also offer them any other Cabinet member. If they agree, there will be no way to keep it out of the final Communiqué.

"After the meeting, Ambassador Bush hosted a reception at his residence. We then went to a cultural variety show at the Great Hall of the People, consisting of singing, dancing and playing of traditional instruments. The technical skills were impressive, but the revolutionary themes and choreography were crude."

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